

Washington, DC—Today, Congressmen Harry Teague and Martin Heinrich helped pass the Home Star Energy Retrofit Act, aimed at helping homeowners save money while boosting energy efficiency and job creation across the country. The legislation, which included an amendment sponsored by Teague and Heinrich that deals with specific building concerns in New Mexico, offers rebates to homeowners who purchase energy saving products like insulation, windows, doors and heating systems.

The Teague-Heinrich amendment protects homeowners and builders in New Mexico by addressing elevation issues and the dramatic topographical variances unique to the state and the Mountain West. The legislation allows states with varying elevation levels to designate more specific climate zone designations to aide in establishing incentives for insulation.

Additionally, the amendment corrects a problem in the bill that would have incentivized homeowners and builders in high altitude communities to purchase windows not designed for that environment. The most commonly available energy efficient windows, which the legislation required under the incentive program, do not work at higher altitudes because the pressure difference at high altitude causes the insulating gas between window panes to escape.

“The Home Star Act will boost southern New Mexico’s economy and help create critical jobs in one of our state’s fastest growing industries. Not only will New Mexican families save money through the rebate program, but they will continue to reduce their energy consumption and see smaller utility bills every month,” said Harry Teague. “Our amendment ensures that these necessary adjustments are made to allow communities across southern New Mexico to take full advantage of the Home Star programs and rebates available to them. This is why all Congressmen should spend time listening to their constituents, so we can make sure our laws take us in New Mexico into account.”

“These changes to the Home Star Energy Retrofit Act will strengthen the bill’s impact in every region of the country,” said Martin Heinrich. “Whether you are retrofitting your home in Albuquerque’s North Valley or in the East Mountains, the bill will stimulate our local economies, put construction workers back to work, and help families save money and energy.”

The bill features two levels of rebates that will help an estimated 3 million American homeowners. The Silver Star program would provide up-front rebates of up to \$3,000 for the installation of proven energy-saving technologies, such as insulation, duct sealing, window and door improvements, air sealing, and advanced water heaters. The Gold Star program rewards homeowners with up to \$8,000 for conducting a comprehensive energy audit and substantially reducing their energy use at home.

“This amendment that Congressmen Teague and Heinrich secured will help put builders back to work and ensure that the renovations available to New Mexicans will perform to their highest levels,” said Derrick Childers, President of the New Mexico Home Builders Association. “I want to thank Congressmen Teague and Heinrich for their work. They were extremely responsive and did the right thing for the industry here in New Mexico.”

The Home Star Energy Retrofit Act has received bipartisan support, and has been endorsed by a broad range of business, labor, environmental, and consumer groups, including the National Association of Manufacturers, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the National Association of Home Builders.

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